

A Short Report

My Studies in England

by M. A. Ahad

*Presented to the Council of the Trained Nurses
Association of India, at the meeting in February*

IT is difficult to be brief and condense my experiences of 26 months in a short report. However, I shall try my best.

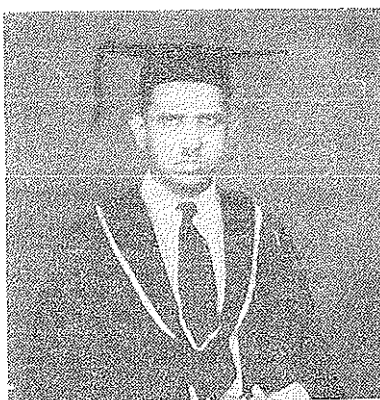
The voyage from Bombay to London was uneventful but for a mild outbreak of fire which excited the passengers one midnight towards the end of our journey.

During the first year of my study I devoted my time to my books and did not allow myself to be drawn into any professional or social activities. However, quite early after my arrival I did pay a courtesy call to ICN House, the National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and, of course, on Miss Alice Wilkinson. I had a rare opportunity of meeting Miss Ohlson at a social arranged by the Royal College of Nursing in her honour during this year. Apart from these few activities I attended the tea parties given by Miss Wilkinson to the members of the TNAI in England, and also did some subsidiary studies to qualify in an examination in Nutrition conducted by the Royal Society of Health of England.

I got accustomed to the cold London weather.

The main course during this year was exacting. Besides the public examination subjects which included anatomy, physiology, nutrition and bacteriology, we had to complete courses of study and to appear for internal examinations in biology, physics and chemistry. General psychology and development of social policy in England, were also taught during this year. By the end of June 1958, our studies reached a hectic stage, facts and still more facts, learnt, forgotten, revised and hopefully retained, until the fateful day in July, when armed with well-filled pens and

relevant paraphernalia, we reported at the London University examination halls. One paper in the morning of three hours in physiology and nutrition, lunch break and a three-hour paper in physiology and anatomy. Inevitable post mortem on things that could have been excluded in the paper and, horror of horrors, those things that have been omitted! Next day a three-hour paper on bacteriology and much the same experience. After ten days came the worst ordeal, the oral examination, followed by a long suspense of 5 to 6 weeks for the results and what a relief to find our names in the pass list.



Mr. M. A. Ahad, R.N., B.A.

During the summer holidays I did a lot of things to make up, as it were, on my drawbacks during the previous year. I went round the British Isles and saw some of the best hospitals and training schools of England and Scotland, attended the annual meeting of the Society of Registered Male Nurses Ltd. at a sea-side town called Morecomb. And above all had an exciting experience of two weeks observation study of district nursing in England. This eventually influenced me to take the full condensed course in district nursing of the Queens

Institute of District Nursing after I had finished my tutors course.

On October 1, 1958, we were back again in College. The first few days seemed rather an anticlimax to the feverish activity which went on before the summer holidays. This year's study was totally different from the first year. In the first year there was much factual learning, facts that cannot be avoided. Second year subjects gave more scope for imagination and manipulation of thoughts. No more were there any concrete facts to get down to but abstract matter to struggle with. What substantial facts can there be in such subjects as general and social psychology, theory of education in which even experts would not agree amongst themselves? Another snag about these subjects was lack of text books suitable to the level of our study. Books there were, some elementary, others top high but none just sufficient for our examination. So we were confronted with the problem of scooping up information from all and sundry books for our purpose.

Public Health was another subject of examination during this year. The facts and figures about the public health programmes of Great Britain we had to memorise and I still doubt the use of these for foreign students. Unfortunately this subject has not been as broad-based as has been some of the subjects in other fields of study, so as to be of equal benefit to the nurses of U.K. as well as the foreign students. Just as in first year we had to do a number of extra subjects, these included History of Nursing which was dealt with in a rather different way by a series of Seminar conducted by the students themselves. And what was my lot? "Evidence of Medicine and Nursing in Vedas and Samhitas" which took

weeks of study at the India Office Library and the Library of the Welcome Foundation. A group thesis on "intelligence, insight and intuition" was another problem to tackle. Ethics, development of nursing in recent years, were also topics of group activity and presentation.

July and the 2nd year came to an end, but I had already started a condensed course in District Nursing in the month of May (theory only), by attending lectures, and continued the practicals of the same for four months. I am indebted to the TNAI for allowing me to extend my stay in England for this purpose.

This is briefly what I have to say on my studies. I am including appendices of information on various institutions and countries which I visited in connection with my studies, study tours and district nurses training. I have naturally formulated my own opinions and impressions on various aspects of British life, education, nursing education and nursing practice. I would reserve these for some suitable occasion rather than waste our time this morning. I would conclude this report with my grateful thanks to every member of the Council and members of the Florence Nightingale Committee of India for this fine opportunity to study and widen my professional experience.

My experience has been an enriching one and full of interest and I hope to be of better service to our profession and Association.

Appendix I

Countries and Institutions visited in connection with my studies.

Scotland & England

1. Royal College of Nursing, London.
2. Royal Free Medical School for Anatomy Demonstration.
3. Central Middlesex School of Medicine for Bacteriology.
4. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine for nutrition demonstrations.
5. High Schools of various types.
6. Brooks General Hospital for teaching practice.
7. Royal Infirmary, Aberdeen, Scotland, for teaching practice.
8. The London Hospital for teaching practice.

9. The Hackney Hospital for teaching practice.
 10. Tottenham Health Centre.
 11. India Office Library
 12. Welcome Historical Library
 13. Library of Nursing
 14. India House Library
- } for seminar & group work
15. Old Peoples Home of London County Council.
 16. Mental Hospital, London.
 17. A Mental Deficiency Hospital.
 18. General Nursing Council for England & Northern Ireland.
 19. Geriatric Unit—Brooks General Hospital, London.
 20. London Hospital, Legature Department, where Hospital Catgut is manufactured.
 21. Burrough's Welcome Pharmaceutical Works.
 22. Glasgow Laboratory's Pharmaceutical Works.
 23. International Council of Nurses.
 24. National Council of Nurses in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

6. United Hospital and Nursing Training School, Sheffield.
7. Royal College of Nursing, Edinburgh.
8. Nursing Studies Unit, Edinburgh University.
9. Edith Cavil Hospital, Brussels, Belgium.
10. Royal Infirmary, Glasgow, Scotland.
(a) Hospital, (b) Teaching Department (c) Experimental school for alternate course of nurse training.
11. Accident Hospital, Birmingham.
12. Strachatro Hospital, Brechin, Scotland.
13. National Nurses Association, Amsterdam, Holland.
14. St. Vincent's Hospital, Koln, Germany.
15. National Nurses Association of Switzerland, Geneva.
16. Nursing Division of the League of Red Cross Society.
17. Nursing Section, WHO, Geneva.
18. Queens Institute of District Nursing, London.
19. East London Nursing Society.
20. Metropolitan District Nursing Association.
21. A Geriatric Hospital, London.

Appendix II

Institutions and hospitals visited during the study tours, and subsidiary studies.

1. East London Technical College for evening studies in Nutrition.
2. The Polytechnic W. 1 evening studies for B.Sc. Physiology classes.
3. University College for a short course in practical psychology.
4. Hotel Diew—Teaching department Paris (France).
5. National Nurses Association of France, Paris.

Appendix III

Qualifications and membership obtained :

1. Sister Tutors Diploma of London University.
2. Certificate in District Nursing of the Queens Institute of District Nursing.
3. Certificate in Nutrition.
4. Membership of the Royal Society of Health.
5. Membership of the Old Internationals Association.

Lord Mountbatten replies ...

In reply to the Association's message of condolence, we have received this letter from Lord Mountbatten.

"I am writing to express my heartfelt gratitude to members of the Trained Nurses Association of India for their kind sympathy which

has touched me very much.

I regret the delay in answering, but I have received literally thousands of condolences.

Yours sincerely,
MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA"